

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

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DRAFTED BY NEA/TUR:RSDILLON:CF

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

INFO AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, TU

SUBJ: CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING TURKISH TREATMENT OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

REF: HARTLEY-DILLON TELECON

1. LETTERS YOU HAVE RECEIVED REGARDING TURKISH TREATMENT
OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES APPARENTLY INSPIRED BY ARTICLE
ENTITLED "WILL TURKEY CONTINUE TO TRAMPLE ON FREEDOM OF
WORSHIP?" IN JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES PUBLICATION, "AWAKE," ON
SEPTEMBER 8. ARTICLE STATES THAT ON JANUARY 24, 1973
MILITARY COURT IN ESKISEHIR SENTENCED FOUR JEHOVAH'S
CHRISTIAN WITNESSES TO PAY FINE OF 5,000 TL EACH FOR
VIOLATION ARTICLE 143/3 OF TURKISH CRIMINAL CODE. ON
APRIL 17, 1973 MILITARY SUPREME COURT UPHELD THE LOWER
COURT. ACCORDING TO AWAKE ARTICLE IN ITS DECISION MILITARY
SUPREME COURT SAID THAT CRIME CONSISTED OF "JOINING WITHOUT
PERMISSION AN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY WITH THE NAME OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES." ARTICLE ALSO ALLEGES ABOUT SEVENTY
PERSONS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, MOST OF THEM AWAITING TRIAL.

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THE BULK OF THE ARTICLE DEALS WITH WHAT IT DESCRIBES AS

A SERIES OF ERRONEOUS STATEMENTS CONTAINED IN THE MILITARY COURT DECISION. THESE MISTAKES AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES DISCUSSED IN SOME DETAIL. ARTICLE ENDS WITH APPEAL TO READERS TO WRITE GOT

OFFICIALS "MAKING KNOWN THE TRUTH ABOUT JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES" AND ASKING GOT TO PROTECT FREEDOM OF WORSHIP AS GUARANTEED IN ARTICLE 19 OF 1961 TURKISH CONSTITUTION.

2. ARTICLE DOES NOT IDENTIFY NATIONALITY OF THOSE ARRESTED BUT IMPLICATION THROUGHOUT IS THAT THESE ARE TURKISH CITIZENS AND THAT THIS IS INTERNAL TURKISH MATTER. ARTICLE IN ADVISING READERS TO MAKE WRITTEN "APPEAL FOR JUSTICE" CAUTIONS THAT SUCH APPEALS MUST BE TEMPERED WITH "UNDERSTANDING OF TURKEY'S SERIOUS INTERNAL PROBLEMS."

3. COPY OF ARTICLE BEING POUCHED TO ANKARA TODAY. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Authority: morefirh
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